

GOOD LOOKS

The Care of the Hands

While face massage finds the beauty doctors divided, especially self-massage at home, which is apt to stretch the skin and encourage wrinkles, there can be no doubt that massage is the basis of well-kept and beautiful hands. You cannot, indeed, overdo massage of the hands, and a few minutes devoted to this too-often neglected part of the toilette night and morning will not fail of its reward. Redness, stiff joints, and chilblains will all be kept at bay, the form improved and maintained, and youthful hands assured long after the face has inevitably aged. Young-looking hands on a middle-aged woman are a great charm to the onlooker and a source of comfort to the possessor.

In the morning brisk friction, always beginning with the tips of the fingers and stroking towards the roots, is enough. Circulation is thus promoted and is likely to last all day. A few quick stretching and relaxing exercises too, extending the fingers to their utmost extent and then suddenly releasing the taut muscles, are an excellent first-thing exercise. At night, however, a little warm almond oil stroked down the sides of the nails and rubbed well into the fingers and the backs of the hands will greatly help to keep the cuticles and nails in order and the skin supple and well coloured.

As a rule, it is not a good plan to wear gloves through the night. They tend to impede circulation and are unpleasant to feel. Unless the hands have been allowed to become disgracefully chapped,

gloves at night should never be resorted to. Gloves for working in by day are another thing, and the woman who has several pairs of working gloves for her different household activities, who changes them as occasion demands, keeps the insides clean, and, if need be, uses a pair of white cotton ones as a lining for the rougher kinds, will never need more than a light rubbing with cream at night. Half the trouble caused by housework to the hands is due to carelessness with gloves and the use of soda. If, instead of soda, a little borax or ammonia is added to washing-up water the hands will not suffer. Dirty hands do no harm so long as they are washed before undertaking further work. Soft water and soap, a rub with a slice of lemon, and careful drying—never forgetting to push down the cuticle of the nails with the towel—will save a world of manicure and worry.

While a home manicure once a week is advisable, and perhaps a professional one every six weeks, the busy woman will be well advised not to colour or varnish her nails, but merely to keep them well polished with a little powder. Daily friction and the almond oil will make the nails a natural rose colour. The artificial colour, like the applied varnish, looks bad unless it is perfectly done and constantly renewed, and even then it wants dressing up to, while whether even then it is beautiful may be gravely questioned. The more natural a well-kept hand looks, the more attractive it is to the discerning.

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